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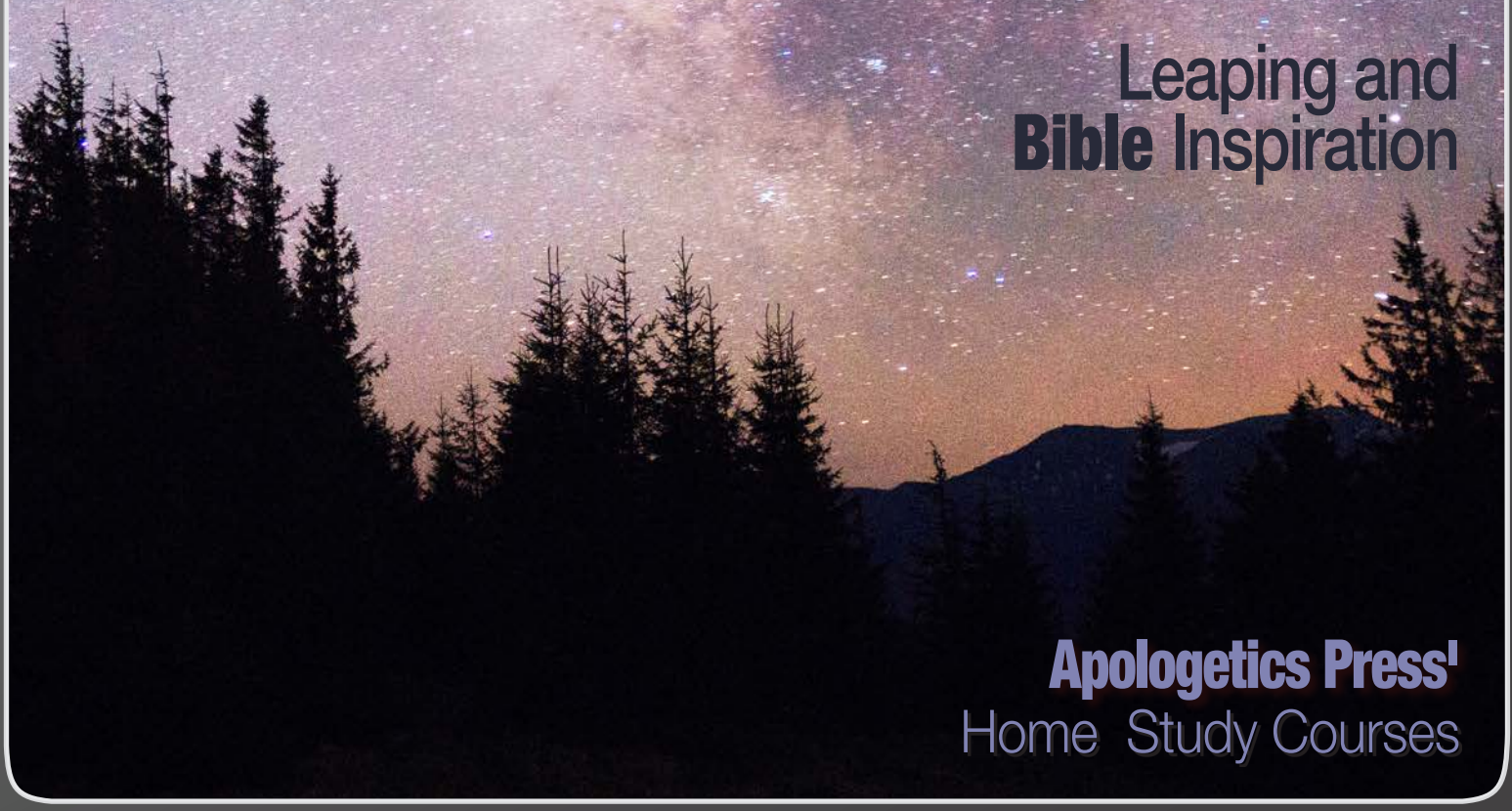
FLAT OR SPHERICAL EARTH? EVALUATING ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATIONS Part 2

The **Aesthetic** Argument for the **Existence of God**

Leaping and **Bible** Inspiration



Flat or Spherical Earth?
Evaluating Astronomical Observations [Part 2]

Branyon May, Ph.D.
& Alana May, M.S.

Article In Brief...

A recent surge in the belief that the Earth is flat rather than spherical in shape merits examination. This article considers scientific evidence via evaluation of the shapes of celestial bodies, observations of the Sun and Moon, consideration of historical perspectives, and consideration of modern first-hand and photographic evidences. Substantial scientific evidence exists that supports the common understanding that the Earth is, in fact, spherical.

[**EDITOR'S NOTE**: A.P. scientist Dr. Branyon May holds a Ph.D. degree in Astrophysics from the University of Alabama. Alana May, his wife and co-author, holds an M.S. in Astrophysics from the University of Alabama. Part I of this two-part series appeared in the August issue. Part II follows below, and continues, without introductory comments, where the first article ended.]

EVALUATING FIRST-HAND AND PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

First-Hand Evidence

IN 1961, the Soviet Union shocked the world by sending the first man into space, Yuri Gagarin. This was not only the first manned flight into space, but the first to orbit Earth. Since that time, more than 500 professional astronauts representing 40 countries have traveled into space as pilots, commanders, or crew members of manned spaceflight programs.[1] The three countries from which these astronauts have been launched include the United States, Russia (previously the Soviet Union), and China. It is important to note for those who might consider conspiracy theories that over the years of space travel, the three countries providing the launch abilities have had tentative and even hostile relations. Yet, even though the over 40 countries who have sent astronauts into space disagree on politics, religion, and economics, their recognition of a spherical Earth that is able to be orbited and studied is consistent.

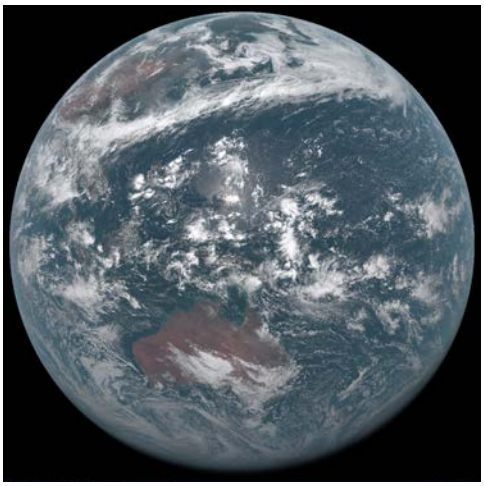
Each of these countries has been fortunate enough to send select men and women to space as **first-hand observers** and scientists to gather data from above the Earth's atmosphere. With more than 50 years of time and over 500 first-hand observers from over 40 countries, the view of Earth as a majestic globe has not been refuted or even brought into question by these individuals. While some may claim a Flat-Earth view, their arguments do not include spaceflight testimony from first-hand observers.

Photographic Evidence: Full-Disk Imagery

While there are many amazing and beautiful images of our Earth provided by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), we want to first focus on the photographic evidence available from numerous international sources. The following collection of photographic evidence only includes imagery from full-planet views of Earth. As you will see, the sources of these images come from a range of satellites, operated by different countries with sometimes different scientific objectives.

Let's begin with photographic evidence from Japan. The Himawari-8 satellite overseen by the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) is currently taking full-disk images of the Earth every 10 minutes, focusing on the region of Japan and its neighbors to the South.[2] Here is a satellite imagery synopsis from the JMA Web site:

> The Himawari series of geostationary meteorological satellites provides



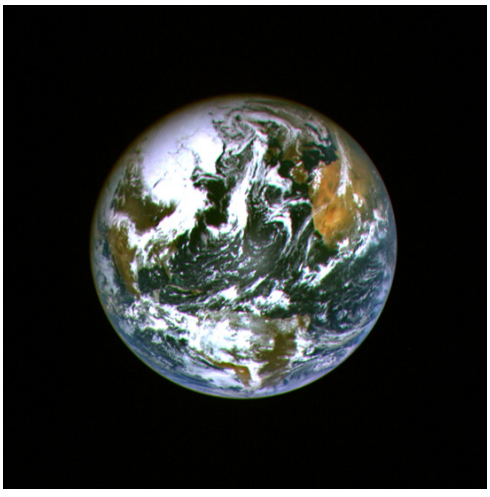
CREDIT: Japan Meteorological Agency

> constant and uniform coverage of the earth from around 35,800 km above the equator with an orbit corresponding to the period of the earth's rotation. This allows them to perform uninterrupted observation of meteorological phenomena such as typhoons, depressions, and fronts.[3]

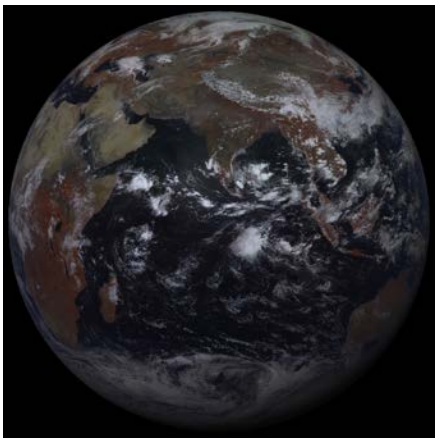
Also the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) captured a full-disk view from the Hayabusa satellite.[4] This satellite's main mission was to study the comet Itokawa, but was able to image the full-disk of Earth from a distance of over 180,000 miles away.

Photographic evidence also comes from the currently operating ELEKTRO-L series of satellites launched by the Russian space agency, Roscosmos.[5] These geostationary satellites are designed to take meteorological images and monitor weather conditions. The ELEKTRO-L2 satellite is positioned over the Indian Ocean and transmits regular images every 30 minutes.[6]

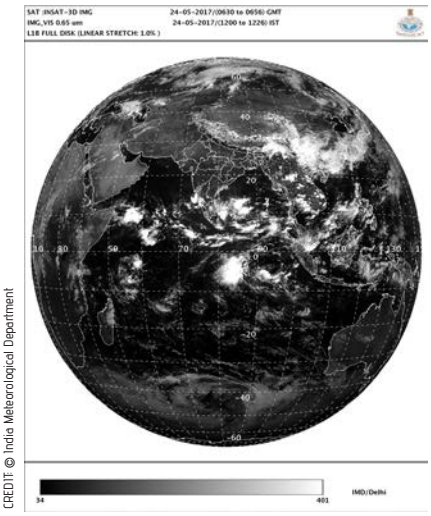
From India, we have photographic evidence from the INSAT-3D geostationary satellite, managed by the India Meteorological Department.[7] Launched in 2013, this satellite is "designed for enhanced meteorological observations and monitoring of land and ocean surfaces for weather forecasting and disaster warning."[8] New full-disk images are regularly relayed to Earth approximately every half-hour.



CREDIT: © JAXA



CREDIT: © Research Center for Earth Operative Monitoring (NTS DMZ)



CREDIT: © India Meteorological Department

From a cooperation of numerous European countries, the Meteosat Second Generation (MSG) satellites take full-disk observations. Operated by the EUMETSAT (European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites), the Meteosat satellites are in geostationary orbits 22,300 miles above Europe, Africa, and the Indian Ocean. New images are taken every

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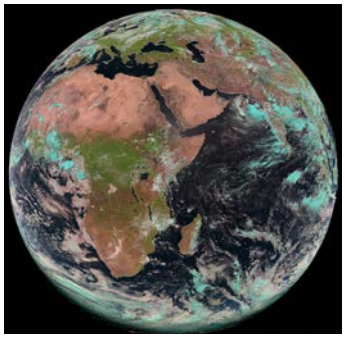
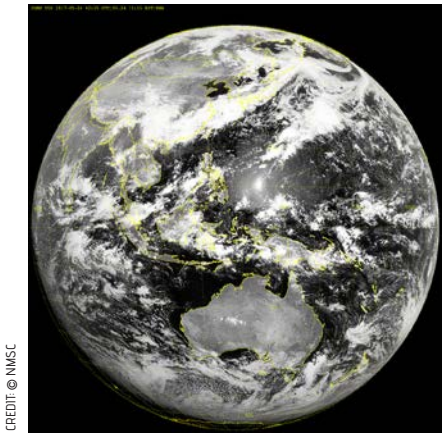


CREDIT ©2017 EUMETSAT

15 minutes in visible and infrared wavelengths.[9]

Launched in 2010, South Korea successfully placed into orbit its first geostationary satellite, COMS (Communication, Ocean and Meteorological Satellite). Managed by the National Meteorological Satellite Center, the COMS satellite takes regular full-disk images with the stated meteorological missions of "continuous monitoring of imagery and extracting of meteorological products, early detection of severe weather phenomena, and monitoring of climate change and atmospheric environment."[10]

From China, we have photographic evidence from the unmanned Chinese lunar explorer Chang'e 5. The test module took this photograph on November 9, 2014 at a distance of 336,000 miles above the Earth's surface.[11] Notice the darker Moon (upper left) is clearly shown in contrast to the bright Earth.



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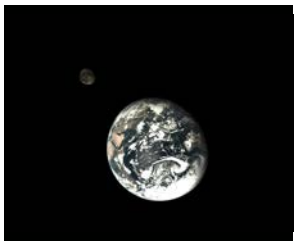
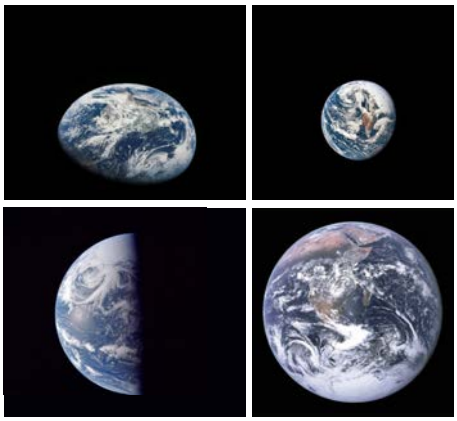


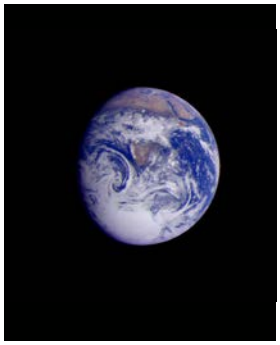
CREDIT: © CNSA

Lastly, we add the photographic evidence taken by the United States. Decades of space travel and many diverse projects have generated a host of full-disk images of our planet. Going back to the early Apollo missions (1961-1972) aimed at traveling to the Moon, NASA astronauts were able to take first-hand photographs on film. While there are many photos, here are four from Apollo 8,10,13, and 17.[12]



CREDIT: Apollo

Later, in 1990, as it began its mission to Jupiter, NASA's Galileo spacecraft took an image back toward Earth from a distance of about 1.5 million miles.[13]

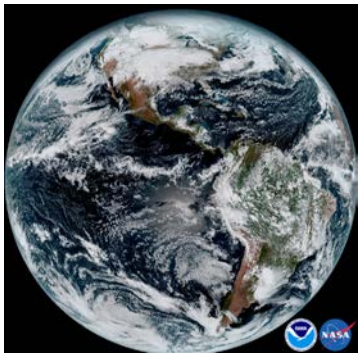


CREDIT: NASA's Galileo spacecraft

In 2015, the joint effort of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NASA, and the United States Air Force launched the Deep Space Climate Observatory (DSCOVR). Located one million miles away, this satellite "will maintain the nation's real-time solar wind monitoring capabilities" in order to facilitate alerts and forecasts for geomagnetic storms caused by solar flares and coronal mass ejections.[14] Different from geostationary satellites that continually maintain the same view of Earth, the DSCOVR satellite will be able to image all of Earth. Being located between the Sun and Earth, it will be able to watch the fully illuminated Earth rotate, imaging all sides of the spherical Earth.

Some of the most recent satellites to take full-disk images are the updated GOES-R series of satellites. These geostationary satellites are managed by NOAA and located to take real-time images of both Eastern and Western Hemispheres of Earth. "The new satellite can deliver vivid images of severe weather as often as every 30 seconds, scanning the Earth five times faster, with four times greater image resolution."[15]

CREDIT: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NASA, and the United States Air Force launched the Deep Space Climate Observatory (DSCOVR)



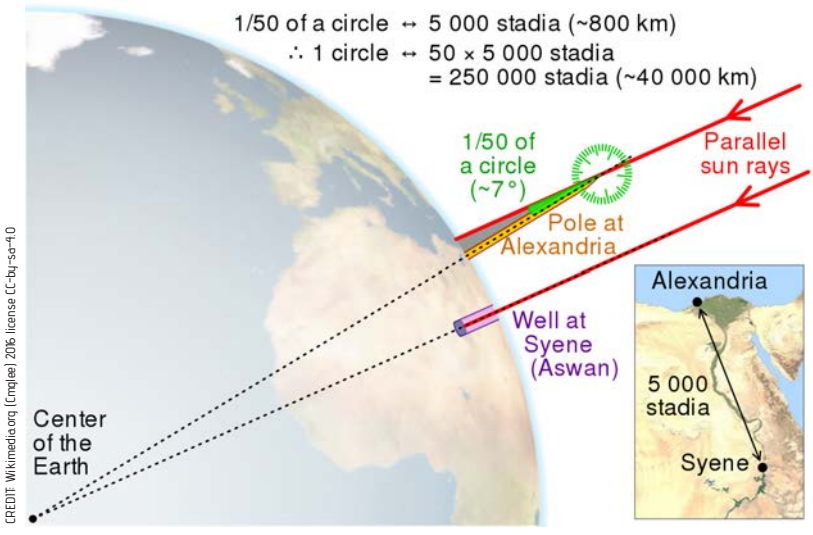
CREDIT: NOAA GOES-R satellite

Historically Recognized As Spherical

Many of us might remember feeling a bit shocked in grade school when our teacher announced, "Many scholars and aristocracy in the 15th century believed that the world was flat and that if you sailed far enough, you'd go right over the edge. And Christopher Columbus set out to prove them wrong." The problem with this statement is that Christopher Columbus (and most people in the 15th century) did not believe in a flat Earth, but rather understood the world to be spherical. Even as we look back to the B.C. era, the accredited scientists of the day believed and were able to prove that the Earth was spherical. As far back as 500 B.C., most Greek scholars accepted the idea that Earth was spherical. Pythagoras (500 B.C.) believed Earth was round for aesthetic reasons, because the sphere was thought to be the perfect shape. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) was one of the first to make application of scientific observations to expected results, given a round Earth: (1) the hull of a ship disappearing over the horizon before the rest of the ship, and (2) Earth's shadow being round during a lunar eclipse. Through time, ancient scientists would gain a deeper understanding of the physics of our world and begin to be able to explain what they were seeing in nature with mathematical formulas.

Eratosthenes of Cyrene (276-194 B.C.) was known as one of the greatest scientists of his time and in the year 240 B.C., King Ptolemy III of Alexandria appointed him chief librarian of what was then considered the hub of learning and the world's greatest library: the Great Library of Alexandria. Probably one of Eratosthenes' most well-known contributions to science was his calculations of Earth's circumference. He was also a leading cartographer of his day and was able to map large regions. But to make a complete map he wanted to know the actual size of Earth. One year, on the Summer Solstice, while he was in Syene (today known as Aswan, Egypt) he noted that the Sun shone directly into the bottom of a well at noon, indicating that it was directly overhead. He realized that since the distance between Syene and Alexandria was known (approximately 5,000 stadia), he could extrapolate that data and determine Earth's circumference. Back in Alexandria, on the following year's Summer Solstice, Eratosthenes set up a tent pole of known height and measured the shadow cast by the pole at noon. Using trigonometric calculations, he found the angle of the shadow to be about 7°, which correlates to about 1/50 of a complete circle. With this data, he calculated Earth's circumference to be about 250,000 stadia.[16] There has been some disagreement on what a stadia represented, but it is estimated to be somewhere between 500 and 600 feet. Using these numbers, we see that Eratosthenes' calculation gives the circumference to between 23,000 miles and 29,000 miles. Modern science gives an equatorial circumference of 24,900 miles.[17]

While Eratosthenes' method and calculations were somewhat crude, one can see the simplicity and significance that his calculations have provided to the scientific community. It is notable that the belief, investigation, and calculation of Earth's shape and size predate modern efforts, such as those of NASA, by thousands of years.



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(cont. on p. 104)

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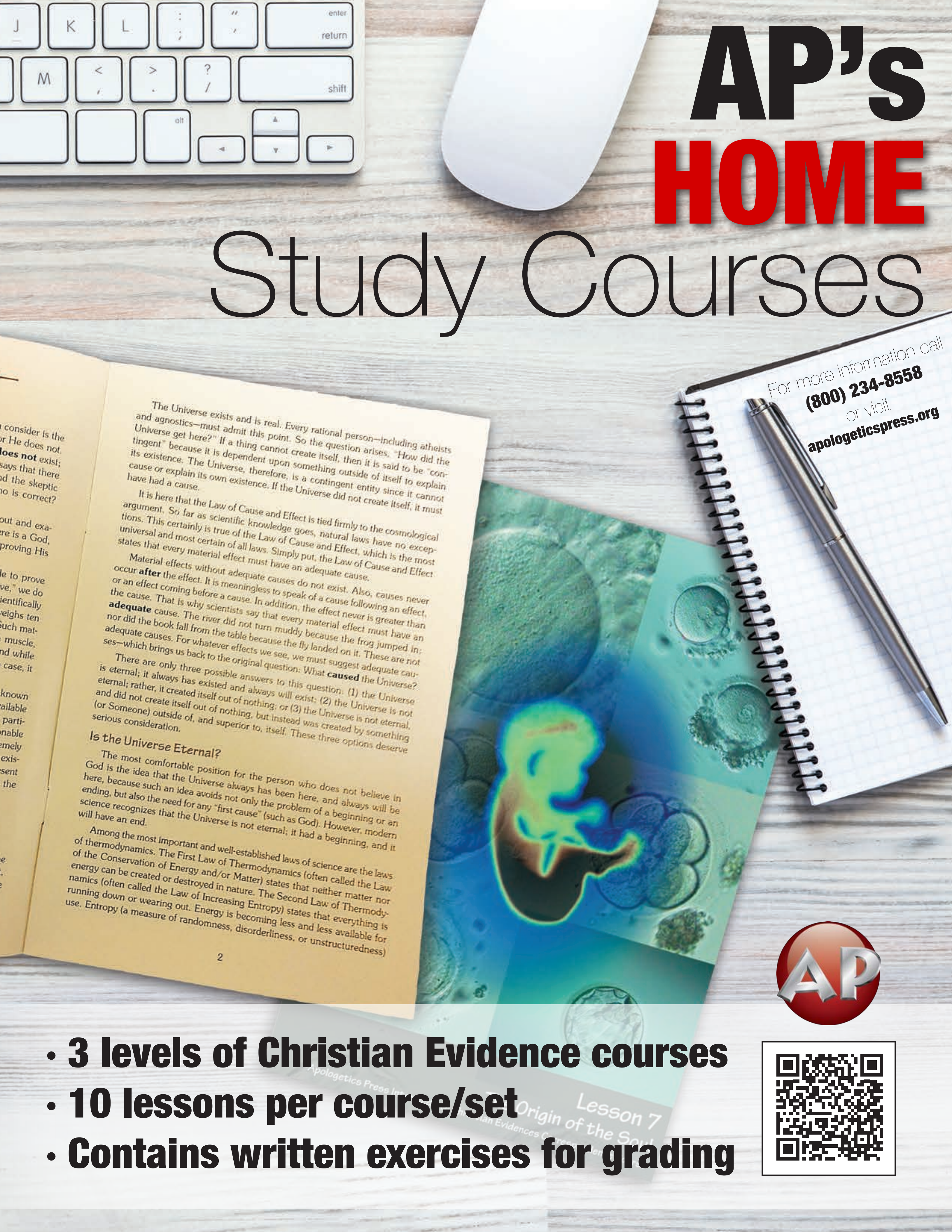
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The Universe exists and is real. Every rational person—including atheists and agnostics—must admit this point. So the question arises, "How did the Universe get here?" If a thing cannot create itself, then it is said to be "contingent" because it is dependent upon something outside of itself to explain its existence. The Universe, therefore, is a contingent entity since it cannot cause or explain its own existence. If the Universe did not create itself, it must have had a cause.
It is here that the Law of Cause and Effect is tied firmly to the cosmological argument. So far as scientific knowledge goes, natural laws have no exceptions. This certainly is true of the Law of Cause and Effect, which is the most universal and most certain of all laws. Simply put, the Law of Cause and Effect states that every material effect must have an adequate cause.
Material effects without adequate causes do not exist. Also, causes never occur after the effect. It is meaningless to speak of a cause following an effect, or an effect coming before a cause. In addition, the effect never is greater than the cause. That is why scientists say that every material effect must have an adequate cause. The river did not turn muddy because the frog jumped in; nor did the book fall from the table because the fly landed on it. These are not adequate causes. For whatever effects we see, we must suggest adequate causes—which brings us back to the original question: What caused the Universe?
There are only three possible answers to this question: (1) the Universe is eternal; it always has existed and always will exist; (2) the Universe is not eternal; rather, it created itself out of nothing; or (3) the Universe is not eternal, and did not create itself out of nothing, but instead was created by something (or Someone) outside of, and superior to, itself. These three options deserve serious consideration.
Is the Universe Eternal?
The most comfortable position for the person who does not believe in God is the idea that the Universe always has been here, and always will be here, because such an idea avoids not only the problem of a beginning or an ending, but also the need for any "first cause" (such as God). However, modern science recognizes that the Universe is not eternal; it had a beginning, and it will have an end.
Among the most important and well-established laws of science are the laws of thermodynamics. The First Law of Thermodynamics (often called the Law of the Conservation of Energy and/or Matter) states that neither matter nor energy can be created or destroyed in nature. The Second Law of Thermodynamics (often called the Law of Increasing Entropy) states that everything is running down or wearing out. Energy is becoming less and less available for use. Entropy (a measure of randomness, disorderliness, or unstructuredness)
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CONCLUSION

In this day and age of readily available information, sometimes just enough "truth" can be given to allow an idea to be plausible and believable in one's mind. Sometimes an idea is given more credence because a celebrity endorses it. Other times, it might take hold because of a rebellion against the norm and someone wanting to be considered a "free-thinker." Whatever the reason a person has for believing something, its source needs to have credibility and must be backed by provable, validated data—evidence.

While the origin of the recent interest in Flat-Earth ideas may not be fully known or pinpointed, we can see that a spherical Earth is the one that has the scientific backing. While we did not consider many other evidences of the Earth's spherical nature, such as Earth's magnetic poles, GPS triangulation and satellites, the Coriolis effect, time zones, distant horizon curvature, Arctic and Antarctic exploration, and circumnavigation, we were able to evaluate numerous easily accessible observations. From our assessment of the shapes of other celestial bodies, observations of the Sun and Moon, consideration of historical perspectives, and examination of modern, first-hand and photographic evidences, we can see for ourselves that the scientific data supports a spherical Earth.

ENDNOTES

[1] "List of Astronauts by Name," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_astronauts_by_name; "Timeline of Space Travel by Nationality," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_space_travel_by_nationality.

[2] "Satellite Imagery" (2017), Japan Meteorological Agency, Otemachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8122, Japan; Image shown: http://www.jma.go.jp/en/gms/smallc.html?area=6&element=1&time=201706270300.

[3] "Meteorological Satellites," Japan Meteorological Agency, http://www.jma.go.jp/jma/jma-eng/satellite/introduction/satobs.html.

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[5] Anatoly Zak (2016), "Russia to Introduce A New Generation of Spacecraft," http://www.russianspaceweb.com/elektro.html.

[6] "ELEKTRO Geostationary Hydrometeorological Spacecraft (In Operation)" (2011), Research Center for Earth Operative Monitoring, http://eng.ntsomz.ru/ks_dzz/satellites/complex_electro); Image shown: ftp://ftp.ntsomz.ru/ELECTRO_L_2/2017/May/24_05_2017/24052017_10%2030.jpg.

[7] http://satellite.imd.gov.in/insat.htm; Image archive: http://satellite.imd.gov.in/archive/INSAT-3D-IMAGER/3D-FULL-DISK/.

[8] http://www.isro.gov.in/insat-3d/insat-3d-advanced-weather-satellite-completes-two-years-orbit.

[9] https://www.eumetsat.int/website/home/Satellites/CurrentSatellites/Meteosat/index.html; Image shown: http://oiswww.eumetsat.org/IPPS/html/MSGIODC/RGB/NATURALCOLOR/FULLRESOLUTION/.

[10] http://nmsc.kma.go.kr/html/homepage/en/chollian/choll_info.do.

[11] "Earth and the Moon from Chang'e 5 T1" (2017), The Planetary Society, http://www.planetary.org/multimedia/space-images/earth/earth-and-the-moon-from-change5t1-2.html.

[12] "Western Hemisphere" (2009), NASA, https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/apollo/40th/images/apollo_image_26.html; "May 18, 1969 - Apollo 10 View of the Earth" (2017), NASA, https://www.nasa.gov/image-feature/may-18-1969-apollo-10-view-of-the-earth; "View of Earth from Apollo 13," Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, https://airandspace.si.edu/multimedia-gallery/5429hjpg?id=5429; "Blue Marble - Image of the Earth from Apollo 17" (2007), NASA, https://www.nasa.gov/content/blue-marble-image-of-the-earth-from-apollo-17.

[13] "PIA00076: Earth - Full Disk View of Africa" (1996), NASA/JPL, https://photojournal.jpl.nasa.gov/catalog/PIA00076.

[14] "DSCOVR: Deep Space Climate Observatory," National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, https://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/content/dscovr-deep-space-climate-observatory; Image shown: https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD//view.php?id=86257.

[15] John Leslie and Connie Barclay (2016), "NOAA's GOES-R Weather Satellite Readies for Historic Launch," https://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/asset/document/goes-r-l-30-press-release_oct6.pdf.

[16] Alan Chodos, ed. (2006), "June, ca. 240 B.C. Eratosthenes Measures the Earth," *APS News*, 15[6]:2, June, https://www.aps.org/publications/apsnews/200606/history.cfm. wiki/File:Eratosthenes_measure_of_Earth_circumference.svg.

[17] "Geodesy for the Layman" (1984), Defense Mapping Agency, http://earth-info.nga.mil/GandG/publications/geolay/TR80003A.html.

THE Aesthetic Argument for God's existence is sometimes considered to fall under the design argument for God's existence (the Teleological Argument). The argument highlights the fact that beauty exists, and more specifically, the ability to appreciate beauty exists. Atheism cannot adequately explain this appreciation in the diverse forms it is found, because that appreciation, by-in-large, has no evolutionary advantage. So, the argument says that the existence of beauty proves that a God must exist Who cares for His Creation and wishes to give us joy and pleasure.

Charles Darwin recognized the Aesthetic Argument as a threat to evolutionary theory. In the *Origin of Species*, he said, "Some authors believe that many structures have been created for the sake of beauty, to delight man or the Creator…or for the sake of mere variety.… Such doctrines, if true, would be absolutely fatal to my theory."[1] Why? Because naturalistic evolution cannot explain why something would become beautiful for the sole benefit of others. According to Darwin, "Natural selection cannot possibly produce any modification in any one species exclusively for the good of another species.… But natural selection can and does often produce structures for the direct injury of other species."[2] Evolution is "survival of the fittest" and "the strong survive." It is the selfish, bloody battle of the strong for survival. It is not about benefitting others. So if naturalistic evolution (i.e., atheism) is true, evolving a trait must have a selfish benefit—not for the benefit of others.

So Darwin conceded, "If it could be proved that any part of the structure of any one species had been formed for the exclusive good of another species, it would **annihilate my theory**, for such could not have been produced through natural selection."[3] In the same breath, however, he made a critical admission: "I fully admit that many structures are of no direct use to their possessors."[4] In other words, contrary to evolutionary predictions, "many structures" are possessed by creatures which are not useful at all to them! His response to the "problem" of beauty was to blindly conjecture that beautiful features must have just accidentally happened or perhaps were useful to a creature in some way at some point in the past, though not today.

Atheists today seem to acknowledge that Darwin's response to the Aesthetic Argument was not satisfactory. They often respond to the beauty "problem" by claiming that beauty evolved accidentally in various creatures and then remained in those creatures because it helped them personally in getting mates—sexual selection. Those beautiful creatures would tend to reproduce more often, keeping the "beautiful" genes "alive." Darwin, however, disagreed with this reasoning. He said, "The effects of sexual selection, when displayed in beauty to charm the females, can be called useful **only in rather a forced sense**.… [M]any structures now have no direct relation to the habits of life of each species."[5] In other words, Darwin recognized that, while sexual selection might help explain some cases of beauty, it does not even **nearly** explain **all** of the examples of beauty we see in the animal kingdom. And that admission highlights the fact that atheists still have not adequately answered the Aesthetic Argument.

Besides that fact, consider: sexual selection attempts to explain why beautiful animals would tend to "stick around," but should not the opposite also be true? Should not the "ugly" animals have died out since they were less "pleasing to the eyes"? Why isn't the animal kingdom more beautiful all around, after "millions of years" of tweaking? According to the fossil record, many "ugly" creatures have existed since they originally came onto the scene and have not changed—in many cases, over "millions of years," according to the evolutionary time line. They have not changed, and yet they have not died out, as evolution would

predict they should. Bible believers can explain why "ugly" things would exist (e.g., the effects of sin, Genesis 3:18; on-going genetic entropy as a consequence of being banished from the Tree of Life, Genesis 3:22-24). But would not evolution predict much more beauty in the animal kingdom if sexual selection is the powerful, beauty-generating mechanism it is espoused to be?

Further, keep in mind that sexual selection cannot work until beauty exists in the first place. Darwin was not able to provide a mechanism through which an animal would "grow" a new trait that would make it beautiful. Random mutations, for example, cannot generate new genetic information—and **new genetic information is necessary to explain beauty where there once was no beauty.** In other words, even if his response to the Aesthetic Argument could explain why beauty exists in the animal kingdom, he did not explain how evolution could create beauty in the first place. He attempted to explain how beauty would be in harmony with "survival of the fittest," but he did not explain the **arrival** of the fittest in the first place. Although we are now some 150 years removed from Darwin, evolutionists still have no answer to that pivotal question.[6]

Also notice that modern atheists only attempt to respond to one "finger" of the Aesthetic Argument—namely why **some** of the beautiful animals exist. Sexual selection does not adequately explain why an orchestra playing Johann Pachelbel's Canon in D Major is so beautiful that it can create an emotional response; why certain things that are not inherently good for you (and are sometimes even bad for you) taste good or smell good; why some things feel good—again, even when they are not always beneficial to you; why looking at a sunrise, waterfall, or ocean can give us such pleasure. Such examples of beauty highlight a more fundamental component of the Aesthetic Argument. Atheists scramble to try to explain why various creatures are beautiful, but the underlying question is, why do we **perceive** something as beautiful in the first place? Even if a beautiful trait could accidentally evolve in one creature, another creature, simultaneously, must also evolve an **appreciation** of that beauty. Even if natural selection could adequately explain why something beautiful tends to survive, it does not explain why we would see that thing as beautiful in the first place. Though "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" and therefore everyone differs somewhat on what constitutes "beauty," nevertheless, **everyone possesses the inbuilt faculty that causes them to conceptualize the characteristic of beauty.**

Why does beauty exist? Because an omnibenevolent God exists Who wants to give His children good things, as any decent parent would; Who wants humans to experience joy and pleasure. So, He has "made everything beautiful in its time" (Ecclesiastes 3:11)—things "pleasant for the eyes" (Ecclesiastes 11:7); people that have a "pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument" (Ezekiel 33:32); things which are "sweet to your taste" (Proverbs 24:13) and "give a good smell" (Song of Solomon 2:13); things that make a "joyful sound" (Psalm 89:15). "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" (Psalm 34:8).

ENDNOTES

1 Charles Darwin (1998), *The Origin of Species* (New York: Grammercy), p. 146.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., emp. added.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., emp. added.
6 Jeff Miller (2013), *Science vs. Evolution* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), revised edition.

SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt		
September 6	Brentwood, TN	(615) 373-4353
September 13	Lexington, AL	(256) 229-5247
September 17	Estill Springs, TN	(931) 596-2649
September 20	Huntsville, AL	(256) 895-8717
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Dave Miller		
September 8-10	Rosenberg, TX	(281) 341-7776
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Jeff Miller		
September 3	Florence, AL	(256) 766-5100
September 6	Huntsville, AL	(256) 895-8717
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Leaping and Bible Inspiration

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

ONE of the marvelous confirmations of the inspiration of the Bible is the existence of hundreds of prophecies in which the writers predicted events far into the future from their day. This phenomenon is particularly fascinating with regard to the "Messianic" prophecies, i.e., those that anticipated the coming of the Messiah, Jesus the Christ.

One such prophecy uttered by the "Messianic prophet" Isaiah is the one found in chapter 35 of his oracles. Specifically, consider the following:

> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.
> **Then the lame shall leap like a deer**, and the tongue of the dumb sing.
> For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert (35:5-6).

This passage, believed to have been uttered in the 8th century B.C., predicted that in the Messianic age to come, i.e., the Christian era, as a result of the miraculous empowerment that would accompany the initial introduction of the Gospel, the blind, the deaf, the lame, and the dumb ("mute," NASB) would experience healing. Interestingly, one would expect as a result of their healing, the blind would be able to see and the deaf would be able to hear. And, comparably, one might expect the prophet to indicate that the lame would walk and the dumb would speak. However, instead, the dumb would not merely talk; they would sing. And the lame would not merely walk; they would "leap like a deer." This latter detail is intriguing. The prophet might merely have been speaking figuratively, simply highlighting the concept that the lame would no longer be confined to his immobility.

However, when one turns to the New Testament and reads the inspired account of the launching of Christianity in the form of the establishment of Christ's church after His ascension into heaven—a fact which He fully predicted (Matthew 16:18-19; 18:17; 26:29; Acts 1:3)—one sees the unfolding of the presentation of the Gospel to the Jerusalem Jews. Luke was given the responsibility of reporting for all time the first 30 years of the history of Christianity. Early in his record, he reports an incident that confirms Isaiah's prophetic prediction:

> Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he, **leaping up**, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, **leaping**, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God. Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him (Acts 3:1-10).

Observe that the lame man was told by Peter to "rise up and **walk**." The lame man walked alright, but Luke meticulously reports that the man also "leaped." This minute detail cannot be coincidental. By divine assistance, Isaiah peered across more than seven centuries into the first century A.D. to see an unnamed man, who had been lame from birth, leaping up as a beneficiary of the confirmatory (Mark 16:20)[1] miracles that accompanied the advent of Christianity, "walking, leaping, and praising God." How in the world could a mere man have predicted such a minute detail so many centuries in advance? He could not have done so on his own ability. Indeed, as Peter stated: "[P]rophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke **as they were moved by the Holy Spirit**" (2 Peter 1:21).

ENDNOTE

[1] Dave Miller (2003), "Modern-Day Miracles, Tongue-Speaking, and Holy Spirit Baptism: A Refutation—EXTENDED VERSION," Apologetics Press, http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&article=1399&topic=293.

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NOTE FROM The Editor

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Dave Miller

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